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MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK PLAN

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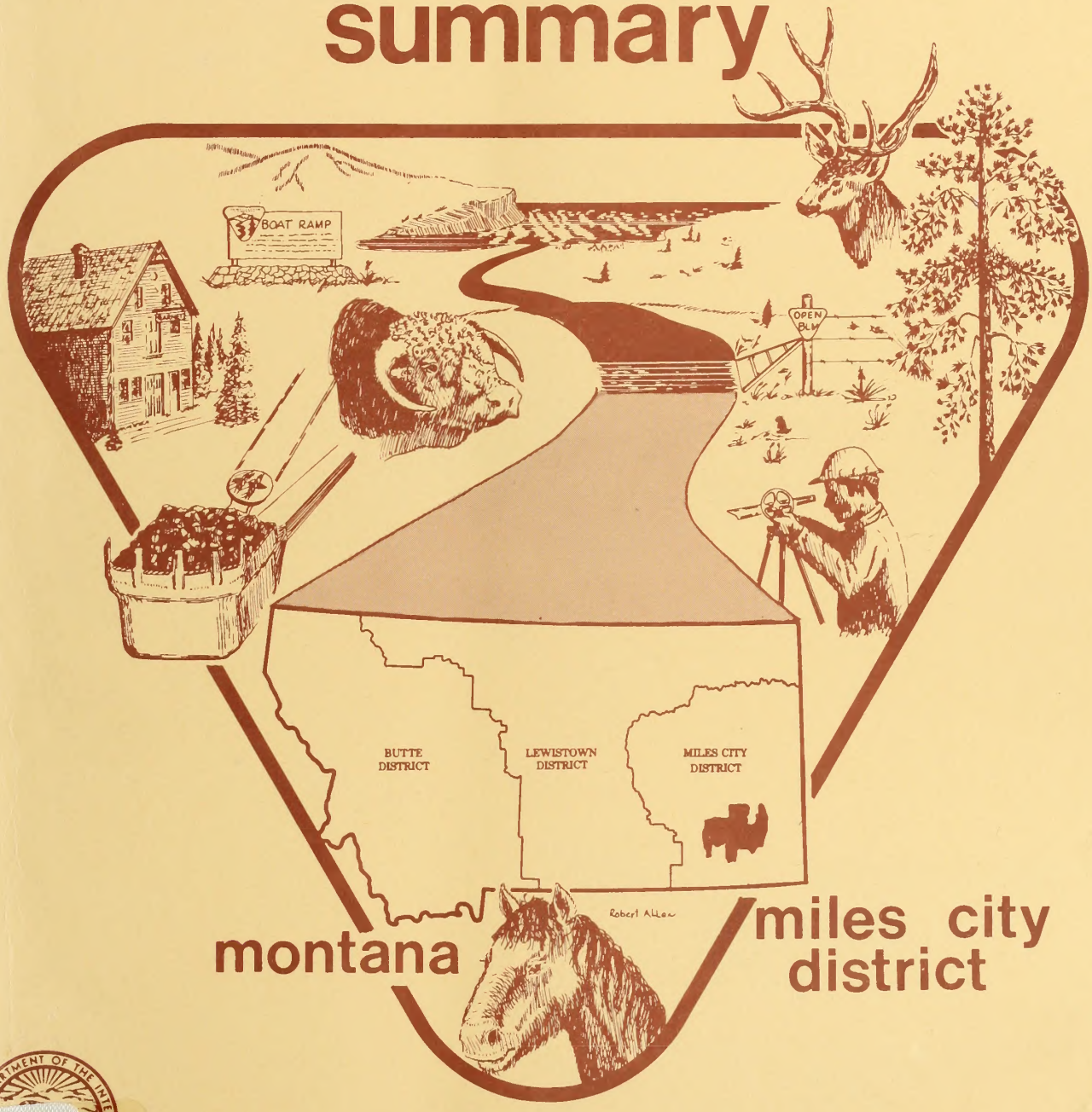

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MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK PLAN

Coalwood Planning Unit

July 1977

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Preface

The Bureau of Land Management's Montana State organization manages resources on almost 8.4 million acres of surface land and 55 million acres of subsurface minerals in Montana, North Dakota, and South Dakota. The Miles City BLM District Office is responsible for more than 3.5 million surface and 12.6 million subsurface acres. These public lands are used by many people for a variety of activities. It is BLM's responsibility to develop coordinated land use allocations specifying the guidelines, constraints, and criteria for the utilization or protection of the public's resources.

To better prepare for present and future demands on public lands, BLM has developed land use plans for many areas of the state. This pamphlet contains a summary of the land use decisions for the public lands in Coalwood Planning Unit covering approximately 32,000 surface and 392,000 subsurface acres in portions of Custer, Powder River, and Rosebud Counties.

These decisions were made after gathering all available resource data and obtaining the viewpoints of local citizens and the user public. This information, as well as the technical expertise of BLM resource specialists, was combined, analyzed, and considered in formulating the land use decisions outlined on the following pages. By design, these decisions are flexible so they can deal with new demands or new conditions that may arise. They will be updated or revised as necessary to help keep this Management Framework Plan current and effective.

In the interest of clarity and brevity, this report is a summary document of the total planning process. The planning effort was made from 1972-1975 for the Coalwood Planning Unit. Specific information materials not included in this report are detailed maps, detailed physical and resource inventory data, and social and economic data. These materials, as well as the other components of BLM's land use planning process, are available for public review during regular business hours at the Miles City District Office. If you wish to review these documents, please make an appointment so we can have someone available to discuss them with you.

My staff and I thank everyone who assisted in this effort, especially those who attended our public meetings or contributed to the final product. We look forward to working with you again in formulating similar plans or updating older plans as the need arises.

George S. Neuberg
District Manager

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Introduction

A. BLM Planning System

Under the Bureau's planning system, available information is gathered, studies are made, and management decisions are developed in seven categories. These categories are lands, minerals, timber, range, watershed, wildlife habitat, and recreation. In order to meet the needs of its diverse public users, BLM must effectively balance the management of these resources. Under the concept of multiple use management, all potential uses of the public's resources are equally considered and evaluated before a management framework plan (MFP) is developed and implemented.

The Bureau of Land Management has developed its land use planning system with three major components:

Program Direction
Resource Information
Management Decisions

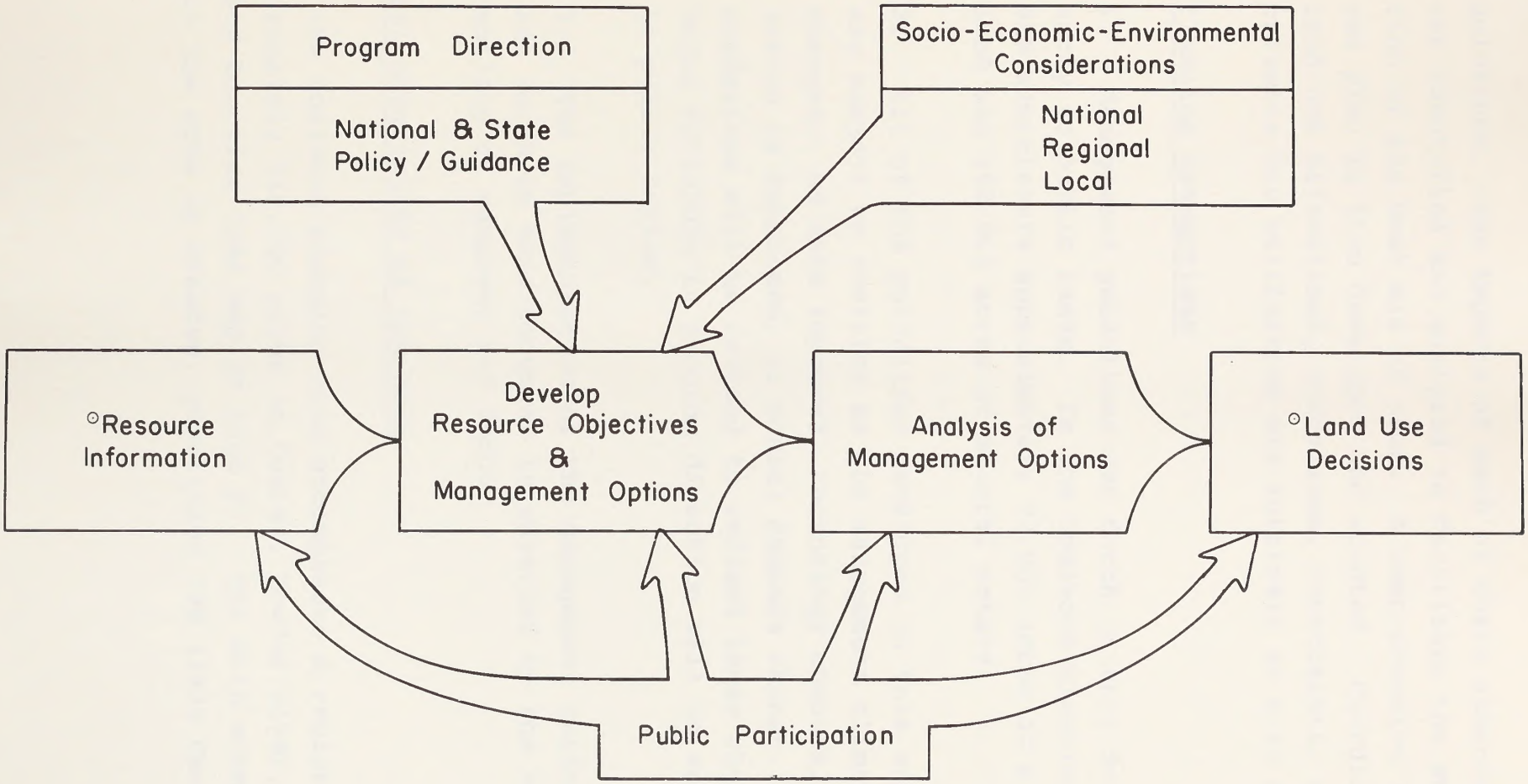
1. Program Direction. General program direction, policies, goals, and priorities are set by the President, Congress, and the Secretary of the Interior. These directions are expressed in executive orders, laws, regulations, and other documents.

2. Resource Information. In initiating this phase of the planning system, BLM specialists gather all of the necessary land and resource information relative to the region under study. Each resource specialist--the forester, range conservationist, minerals specialist,

watershed specialist, etc.--analyzes the situation within the planning unit area to determine current condition, use, trends, and problems concerning his resource responsibility. This analysis is then further developed to identify maximum potential for the resource use without consideration of competing or conflicting uses. The importance of this step is that each resource potential is considered individually. In addition, socio-economic data is gathered and analyzed and an ecological profile is prepared to facilitate the evaluation of land use alternatives generated by the planning system. In compiling the above information, the Bureau contacts traditional, as well as new interests, to be certain all available data has been obtained before the planning process is completed.

3. Management Decisions. The next phase of the planning system is designed to resolve resource use conflicts and to provide basic guidelines for the use and management of the public lands being analyzed. This is the heart of the planning system. At this stage, each resource specialist prepares objectives and outlines specific proposals for the optimum use of his resource based on current technology, program directions, and the socio-economic needs of the region. Each individual resource proposal is then fully documented and individually presented utilizing a map and overlay system. At this point, conflicts between various resource proposals and possible multiple use solutions are identified through careful analysis and utilization of narratives, maps, and overlays. Based on comments and information received through public participation, BLM managers are often able to develop additional land use alternatives and multiple use

B.L.M. PLANNING SYSTEM



⊙Lands
⊙Minerals
⊙Range
⊙Recreation
⊙Watersheds
⊙Timber
⊙Wildlife

B. BLM Planning System Flowchart

solutions. The impacts of each of these alternatives are identified and analyzed to facilitate the selection of the best mix of uses. A comprehensive land use plan is then developed and adopted. Coordinated land use allocations, guidelines, constraints, and criteria for utilization are intrinsic to this plan.

B. Planning Assumptions

1. Management guidelines set forth in this document apply to public lands. In the Coalwood planning area, BLM administers approximately 32,000 acres of surface land and 392,000 acres of mineral estate.

2. All of the guidelines developed in this analysis are subject to revision as the management climate changes. As data improves, technology changes, legislation is developed, or social demands change, these guidelines will be revised to reflect those changes. Major revisions in program direction will be subject to public review.

3. The implementation of the management guidelines set forth in this document is governed by the availability of manpower and funds.

General Description of the Area

The Coalwood planning area encompasses a region of approximately 916,900 acres in Custer, Powder River, and Rosebud Counties (see map on page 6). The main community within the area is Broadus, population 799 (1970 Census).

The most dominant and important physical features include the Tongue River, Powder River, and Pumpkin Creek. Numerous drainages dissect the area creating interstream uplands and gently rolling plateaus. The Ashland Division of the Custer National Forest lies more or less adjacent to the west boundary of the planning unit.

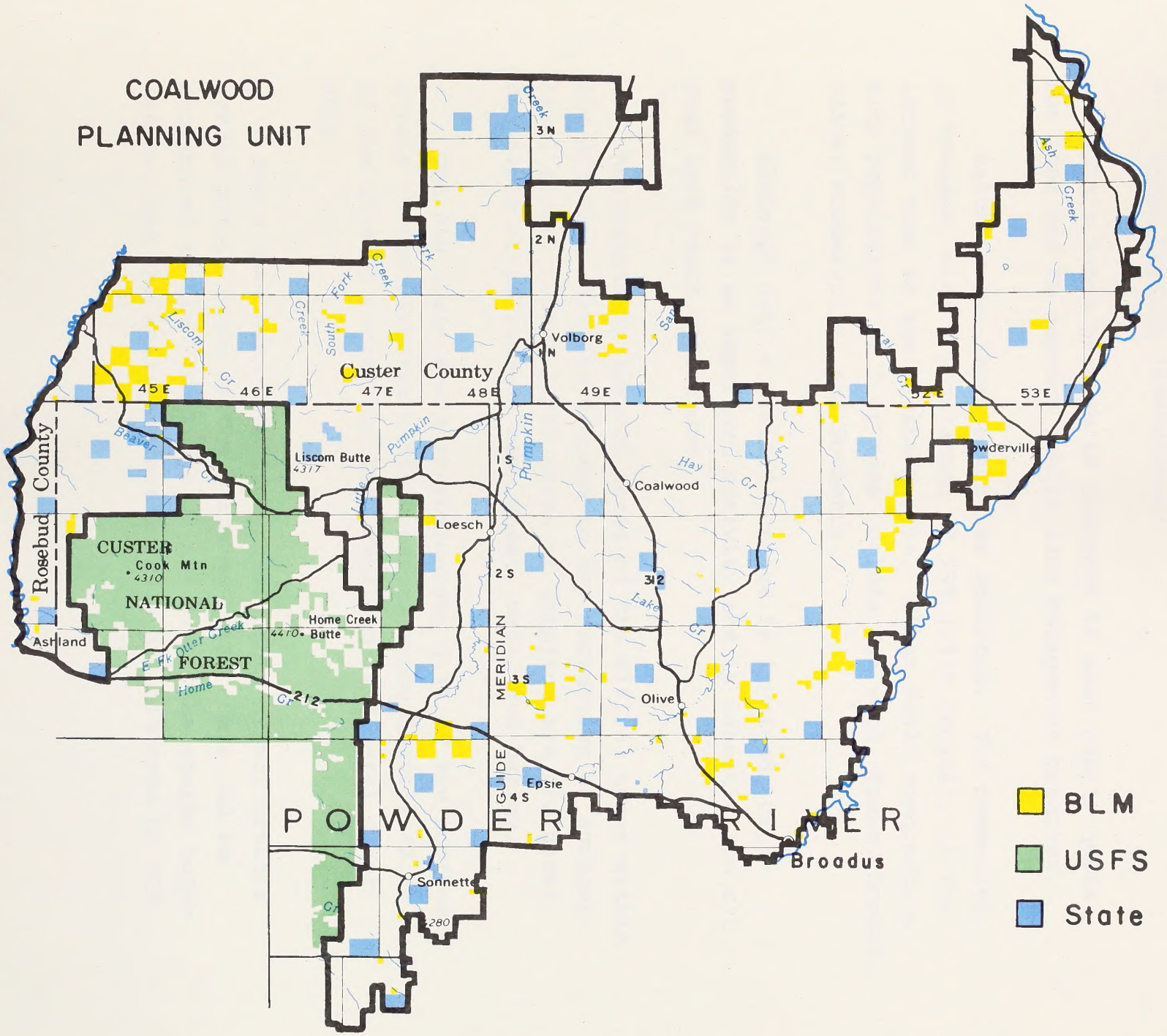
Ranching is the major contributor to the area economy.

There are no existing strip mines in the planning area.

The surface ownership of the planning area is predominantly private with scattered tracts of public lands; however, approximately 43% of the subsurface estate is in federal ownership.

OWNERSHIP AND ACREAGE STATISTICS
ACRES

	Public Lands	%	Other	%
Surface	32,000	3.5	884,900	96.5
Subsurface	392,000	42.7	524,900	57.3


COALWOOD
PLANNING UNIT
Custer County
Rosebud County
CUSTER
NATIONAL
FOREST
Cook Mtn
4310
Liscom Butte
4317
Home Creek
Butte
4410
Ashland
Volborg
Coalwood
Loesch
Olive
Epsie
Sonnette
Broadus
Powderville
POWDER RIVER
GUIDE MERIDIAN
3 N
2 N
1 N
1 S
2 S
3 S
4 S
45 E
46 E
47 E
48 E
49 E
52 E
53 E
312
212
BLM
USFS
State

Resources Administered by BLM

A. Lands Program (Background)

BLM's lands program is designed to meet public needs for land and to support public land management programs.

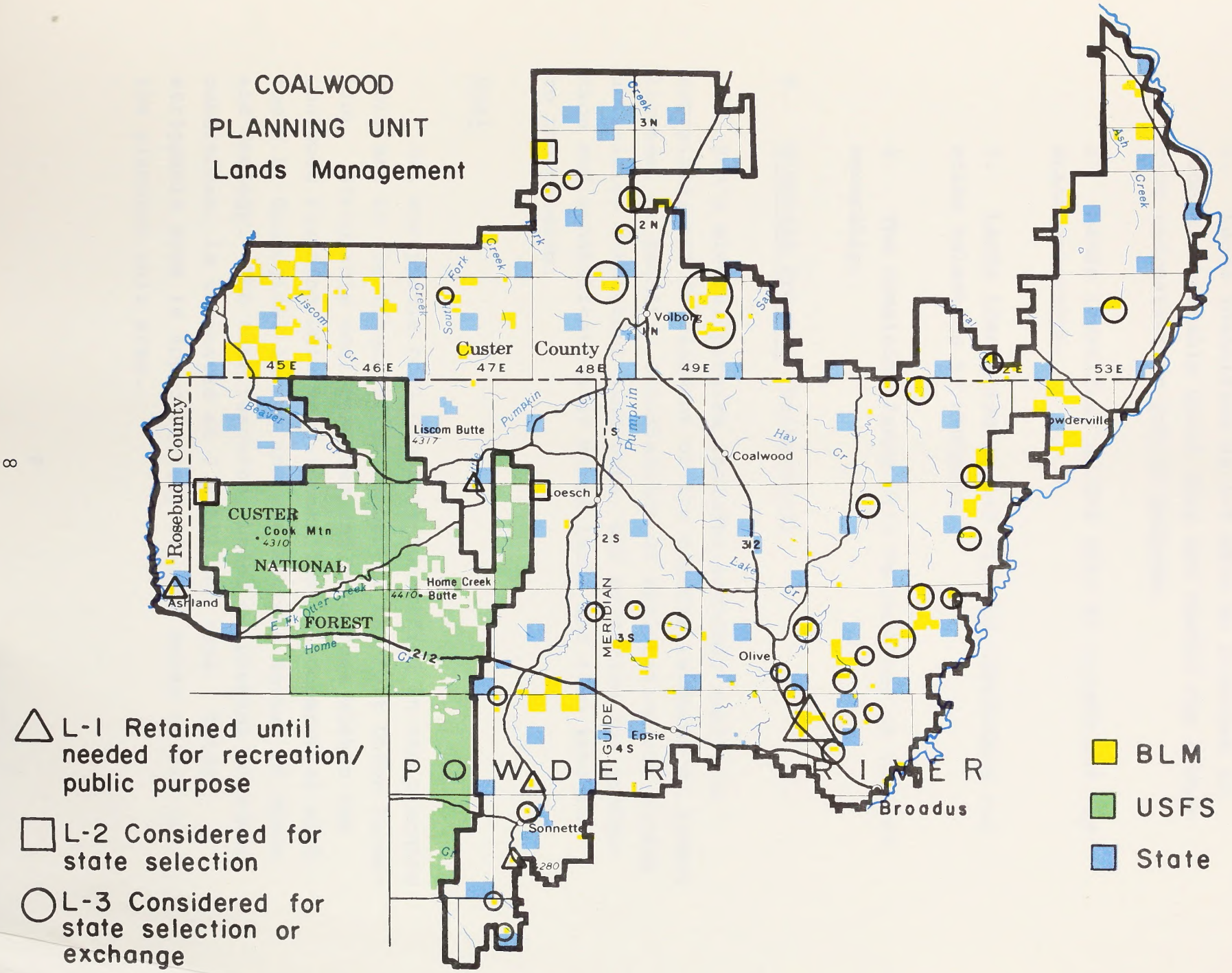
Little urban development has occurred. The community of Broadus, with a population of 799 (1970 Census), is the largest town in the planning unit. Other small communities with populations of 5 or less include Coalwood, Epsie, Loesch, Olive, Powderville, and Sonnette.

Although only a limited acreage is involved, crop production is an important activity and is essential to all year long ranch operations.

Approximately 128,000 acres of the 916,933 acres within the planning unit are devoted to the production of agricultural crops. About 3,360 acres of cropland are irrigated. Principle crops include hay, wheat, oats, and barley.

The BLM administers approximately 3.5% of the surface estate in the planning unit; however, approximately 42.7% of the mineral estate has been retained in federal ownership.

There have been relatively few rights-of-way granted across public lands in the planning unit. This can be attributed to the remoteness of the area, the sparse population, and the small surface acreage administered by BLM.


COALWOOD
PLANNING UNIT
Lands Management
Custer County
Rosebud County
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NATIONAL
FOREST
Cook Mtn
4310
Liscom Butte
4317
Home Creek
Butte
4410
Ashland
Volborg
Coalwood
Olive
Epsie
Sonnette
Broadus
Hay Cr
Lake Cr
Home Cr
E Fk Otter Creek
Pumpkin Cr
Liscom Cr
South Fork Creek
Ash Creek
Beaver Cr
212
312
280
3N
2N
1N
1S
2S
3S
4S
45E
46E
47E
48E
49E
52E
53E
GUIDE MERIDIAN
POWDER RIVER
L-1 Retained until needed for recreation/ public purpose
L-2 Considered for state selection
L-3 Considered for state selection or exchange
BLM
USFS
State

Lands Resource Allocation Decisions

1. Lands identified as L-1 will be retained in federal ownership until they are needed for a bona fide recreation or public purpose.

2. Lands identified as L-2 will be considered for state selection.

3. Lands identified as L-3 will be considered for state selection or exchange.

4. The remaining lands will be retained in federal ownership.

B. Minerals Program (Background)

BLM's mineral program includes economic analysis, appraisal, and development of the mineral resource by lease, license, or permit. Coordination of exploration and mining activities with other land uses, and provision for protection and rehabilitation of mined lands are also integral to the program.

Coal

All strippable coal deposits identified in the planning unit are in the Tongue River member of the Fort Union Formation. Strippable coal reserves and resources within the Coalwood Planning Unit were identified in cooperation with the U.S. Geological Survey and the Montana Bureau of Mines and Geology. The coal resource, based on present economic conditions, is estimated at 7.2 billion tons. Total strippable area is approximately 211,000 acres or 23% of the planning unit area.

The above figures are estimates based on geologic inference and extrapolation of drill hole data existing at the time of the study. Sufficient drilling has not been conducted to allow calculation of exact coal reserves or minimum bid determinations for leasing.

The planning unit is divided into thirteen major coal deposits. These are the Pumpkin Creek, Foster Creek, Broadus, Diamond Butte, Yager Butte, Threemile Buttes, Sonnette, Little Pumpkin Creek, Sand Creek, Beaver Creek-Liscom Creek, Ashland, Tonger River-Pumpkin Creek Divide, and Fire Gulch deposits. Table 1 (page 15) shows the breakdown of each area into coal fields and includes reserve figures and other pertinent data.

There are no operating strip mines within the Coalwood Planning Unit.

Oil and Gas

Even though the structural evidence on the surface or near surface does not indicate any geologic structures of sufficient size to warrant oil and gas exploration, the stratigraphy in the Coalwood Planning Unit is favorable for both oil and gas accumulation. Stratigraphic traps or deep structures which have been masked by overlying younger rocks may be present, but additional exploratory drilling needs to be done for their discovery.

Although indications show southeastern Montana to have significant potential for oil and gas, Montana's tax structure provides little incentive for companies to locate new oil and gas fields.

To date, no oil has been reported discovered in the Coalwood Planning Unit. The nearest producing field is the Bell Creek oil and gas field about 50 miles to the southeast.

Two gas fields lie within the Coalwood Planning Unit. These are the Pumpkin Creek and Liscom Creek fields. There are currently four producing wells in the Pumpkin Creek field and seven producing wells in the Liscom Creek field.

Sand, Gravel and Clinker

Small deposits of sand and gravel dot the major stream valleys in the planning unit, especially along Pumpkin Creek, Little Pumpkin Creek, Foster Creek, Sand Creek, and the Tongue River.

At present, none of the deposits in the planning unit are near enough to major population centers to be of significant value, but the deposits may prove to be valuable in the future with growth and development. The major use is for highway construction. The estimated reserve of sand and gravel near existing highways is 640,000 cubic yards.

Continued use of clinker as road surfacing material on secondary roads can be expected. Any new mining operation will require roads, parking lots, and building bases which can and probably will use clinker as a construction material. Clinker is plentiful throughout the planning unit and the supply should be more than ample for any future requirements.

Locatable Minerals

No locatable minerals (such as gold, silver, and uranium) are known to exist within the Coalwood Planning Unit, although there may be some uranium potential.

Mineral Resource Allocation Decisions

1. Coal (see Coal Acreage and Tonnage Table, page 13)

   a. Coal leases in the least-conflict areas of Foster Creek, Sand Creek, Pumpkin Creek, Broadus, Little Pumpkin Creek, and Ashland coal fields will be considered.

   b. Mining will be prohibited within major river and stream flood plains.

   c. Contract drilling programs in coal resource areas conducted in concert with appropriate state and federal agencies will be continued along with exploration licenses to private individuals or industry.

   d. Coal for domestic use will be offered to individuals living in the areas. A community pit will be established if sufficient interest arises.

   e. Deep coal data gathering programs will be encouraged.

2. Oil and Gas

   a. Oil and gas exploration will be encouraged unit-wide and leases will be issued to allow development.

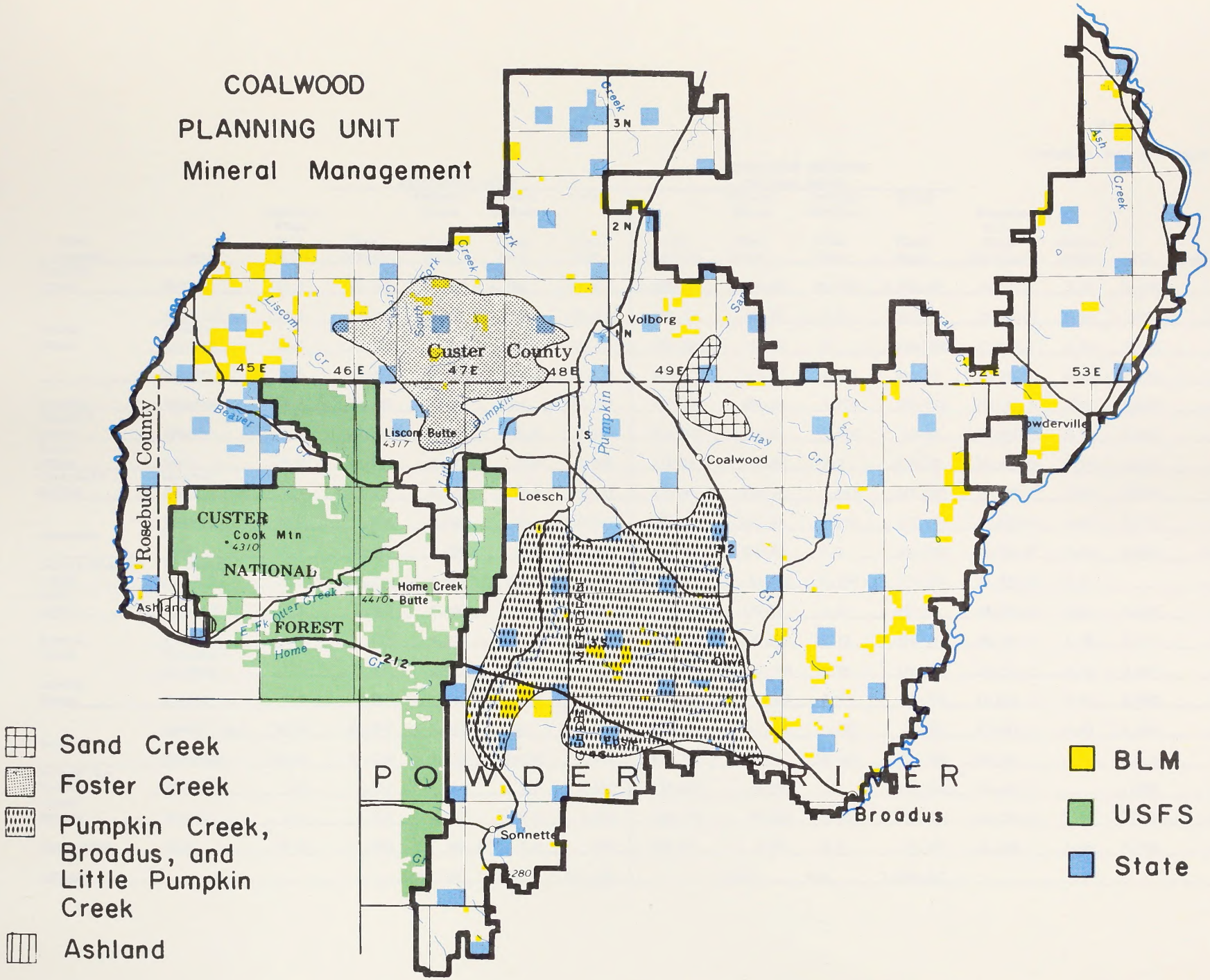
3. Sand, Gravel, and Clinker

   a. Public lands will be inventoried for the location of sand, gravel, and clinker resources.

   b. Sites which can feasibly be developed will be designated, and community pits established where sufficient demand exists.

COALWOOD PLANNING UNIT
FEDERAL COAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Coal Deposit	Federal Coal Recommended For Leasing	Federal Coal Recommended Not To Be Leased Due To Resource Conflicts
Pumpkin Creek	20,608 acres 1,094 million tons	0
Foster Creek	16,655 acres 340.8 million tons	5,964 acres 113.206 million tons
Broadus	12,108 acres 486.04 million tons	0
Diamond Butte	0	3,763 acres 73.63 million tons
Yager Butte	0	2,227 acres 47.9 million tons
Three Mile Buttes	0	8,442 acres 137.52 million tons
Sonnette	0	13,530 acres 489.85 million tons
Little Pumpkin Creek	486 acres 12,291 million tons	2,150 acres 54.377 million tons
Beaver Creek-Liscom Cr.	0	6,578 acres 154.94 million tons
Ashland	2,867 acres 208.38 million tons	1,120 acres 99.12 million tons
Tongue River - Pumpkin Creek Divide	0	1,966 acres 27,217 million tons
Fire Gulch	0	102 acres 4.06 million tons
Sand Creek	2,688 acres 102.73 million tons	0
TOTAL	52,724 acres 2.14151 billion tons of strippable coal	45,842 acres 1.20182 billion tons of strippable coal


COALWOOD
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Loesch
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Sonnette
Broadus
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212
Sand Creek
Foster Creek
Pumpkin Creek, Broadus, and Little Pumpkin Creek
Ashland
BLM
USFS
State

TABLE 1

COALWOOD COAL DATA SHEET

Coal Deposit	Seam	Average Plan. Unit Thick.	STRIPPABLE ACRES Total Deposit	Federal Total Plan. Unit	Federal Surface Plan. Unit	Total Plan. Unit	STRIPPABLE RESERVES (Million Tons) Total Deposit	Federal Total Plan. Unit	Federal Surface Plan. Unit	Total Plan. Unit	Average P.U. Yield Tons/Acre	Strip. Ratio	Btu	% Sulphur	Ash
Pumpkin Creek	Sawyer	30.0	45,695	20,608	1,868	44,979	2,426.5	1,094.33	99.195	2,388.48	53,102.1	3.25	7,438	.34	7.5
	Knobloch	14.4	27,802	8,012	153.6	27,802	708.14	204.07	3.91	708.14	25,470.8	4.22	7,573	.76	7.8
Foster Creek	Flowers-Goodale	10.1	14,445	4,096	0.0	14,445	258.915	73.42	0	258.915	17,924.4	6.11	7,553	.51	7.8
	Terret	9.5	27,462	10,521	844.8	27,139	460.875	176.53	14.175	455.45	16,782.1	6.53	7,770	.21	5.8
Broadus	Broadus	22.7	18,430	12,108	102	17,201	739.81	486.04	4.098	690.485	40,142.2	3.68	7,437	.27	7.2
Diamond Butte	Canyon	11.1	21,364	3,763	76.8	3,763	418.015	73.63	1.503	73.63	19,566.6	5.74	7,330	.43	4.8
Yager Butte	Cook	29.0	14,508	2,227	0.0	2,508	312.02	47.90	0.0	128.70	51,330.0	6.50	7,254	.63	6.7
Threemile Buttes	Canyon-Ferry	9.2	13,837	8,442	25.6	9,152	225.40	137.52	.417	149.085	16,289.7	5.76	6,867	.94	5.5
	Pawnee	22.0	8,224	4,864	76.8	6,957	320.25	189.41	2.990	270.910	38,940.9	3.26	6,964	.88	9.8
Sonnette	Cook	19.6	10,470	8,666	0.0	10,378	362.995	300.44	0.0	359.790	34,668.6	5.06	6,891	1.23	8.1
Little Pumpkin Creek	A, Sawyer C,D,E,X	14.3	8,534	2,636	204.8	4,950	215.830	66.665	5.180	125.185	25,290.0	5.30			
Sand Creek	Knobloch	25.4	5,952	2,688	51.2	5,952	267.34	120.73	2.30	267.34	44,914.4	2.22	7,340	.30	6.6
Beaver Creek	Knobloch	16.3	17,075	4,198	106.8	12,621	491.625	120.87	30.75	363.38	28,791.8	4.68	8,027	.50	7.7
	Flowers-Goodale	9.0	7,885	1,655	310	7,628	125.61	26.365	4.94	121.52	15,930.7	6.11	8,102	.96	8.1
Liscom Creek	Terret	6.0	966	725.6	0.0	966	10.255	7.705	0.0	10.255	10,616.7	5.01	8,102	.96	8.1
	Sawyer, A,C	10.0	20,262	1,042	20	1,664	357.49	18.385	.355	29.360	17,643.0	6.55	7,883	.49	4.9
Ashland	Knobloch	50.0	27,200	4,013	332.8	8,089	2,696.20	355.15	29.460	715.880	88,500	2.58	8,421	.15	4.8
Tongue R.-Pumpkin Creek	Flowers	7.6	1,157	514	0.0	1,157	15.564	6.914	0.0	15.564	13,223.0		7,555	.56	8.15
Divide	Terret	7.9	3,309	1,452	89.0	3,154	46.269	20.303	1.245	44.102	13,750.0		7,245	.22	5.69
Fire Gulch	Cook	29.0	8,486	102.4	0.0	256	336.70	4.06	0.0	13.140	51,330	4.38	7,739	.33	3.8
TOTALS				102,333	4,262	210,761		3,573	205	7,189.311					

C. Timber Management (Background)

The Bureau-administered forest resource in the planning area is essentially undeveloped. There are approximately 511 acres of commercial timber. The site index on all sites is low to extremely low because of the limited rainfall in the area on shallow, unfertile soils. Timber stands on the public lands in this planning unit lack the capability of management according to the principles of sustained yield management.

Major Recommendations for Timber Management Program

1. The forested lands in this unit will be managed as protection areas.

2. Sales of posts and poles from public lands will be permitted on a demonstrated need basis at fair market values. Necessary precautions must be taken to prevent damage of the existing understory vegetation and soils.

3. Require the rehabilitation of land mined for coal or disturbed by related mining activities.

D. Range Management Program (Background)

Condition and Trend

The Coalwood Planning Unit comprises portions of the Tongue River and Powder River drainages. The Missouri River Basin studies evaluated range conditions in these drainages using the ecological method by comparing undisturbed sites with those which have been utilized.

In the Tongue River drainage, 25% of the public lands were in "excellent" condition, 50% in "good" condition, 16% in "fair" condition, and less than 1% were in "poor" condition.

In the Powder River drainage, the lands were generally rated as being in "good" condition.

Grazing Administration

The planning unit has 65 permittees whose allotments encompass approximately 54% of the total land area in the unit. Grazing is administered under Sections 3 and 15 of the Taylor Grazing Act. There are 6,606 AUMs licensed on public lands within the Coalwood Planning Unit. The public lands are scattered and isolated throughout the planning unit.

There are no allotment management plans on any BLM lands in the planning unit.

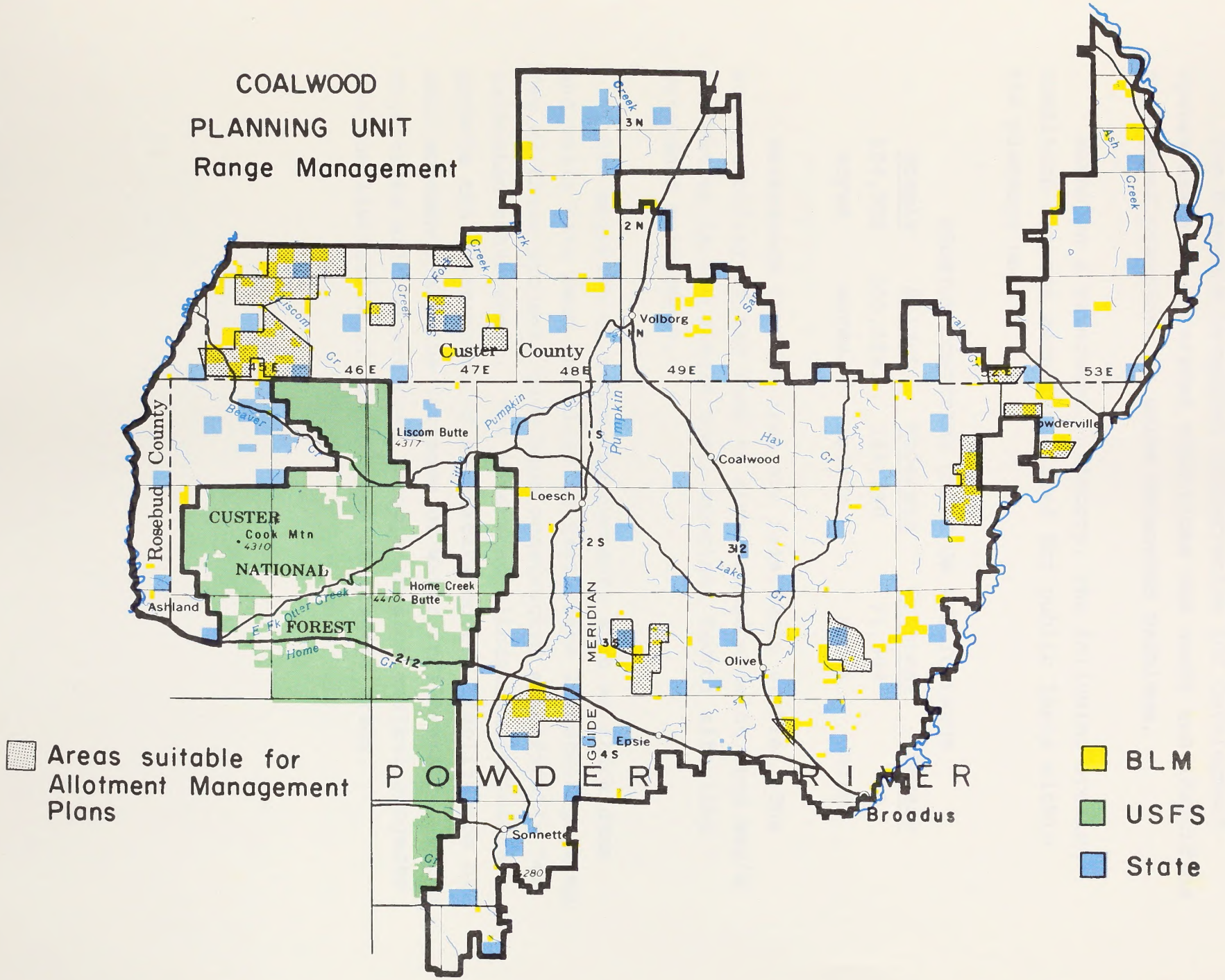
Range Resource Allocation Decisions

1. Grazing systems will be implemented on all suitable allotments in order to obtain the highest livestock use compatible with other resource values.

2. The BLM will not allow artificial treatment for increased forage production until intensive grazing management in the form of allotment management plans has been implemented and an environmental statement prepared.

3. On public lands not suited for allotment management plans, a level of management which will at least provide a sustained yield of livestock forage will be maintained.

4. Lands mined for coal or disturbed by related mining activities will be rehabilitated.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Range Management
Areas suitable for Allotment Management Plans
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Olive
Epsie
Sonnette
Broadus
Ashland
Powderville
Beaver Creek
Pumpkin Creek
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GUIDE MERIDIAN

E. Watershed Program (Background)

The Bureau's watershed conservation and development system assesses watershed conditions and needs and identifies management practices to solve watershed problems.

Based on a watershed inventory, the following erosion condition classes were identified for public lands within the planning unit:

EROSION CONDITION CLASS ON PUBLIC LANDS

Stable	Slight	Moderate	Critical	Severe
104,900 acres	555,684 acres	184,260 acres	71,909 acres	0 acres

Watersheds in this area are relatively stable. The susceptibility of the land to accelerated erosion from man's activities is the single most important factor affecting watershed management.

The majority of range improvements such as stock dams and wells have been installed to facilitate livestock grazing. Few of these projects have been constructed specifically for watershed enhancement. The watershed allocation decisions promote the maintenance of vegetative cover, stablization of soil movement, and the increase of water infiltration. These objectives will be achieved through erosion control projects and the limitation of disturbance in fragile areas.

Watershed Resource Allocation Decisions

Restricted Use Area, K-4

1. Restricted use areas will be inventoried to assess needs for improving and protecting water quality and associated ecosystems.

2. Where necessary, surface uses will be modified or eliminated on frail lands to improve watershed stability.

Management Area, K-5

3. Watershed stability will be maintained by regulating activities that significantly reduce ground cover, such as off-road vehicle use and strip mining.

Management Area, K-5 (Area 1-A)

4. Alluvial bottoms and flood plains will be managed to maintain or improve watershed conditions.

Management Area, K-5 (Area I-B)

5. Surface uses will be managed to maintain a high percentage of ground cover to improve watershed stability.

Coal Lease Consideration Areas (See Minerals Map, page 14)

6. Surface and subsurface soils displaced from strip mining operations will be stockpiled and replaced in sufficient depth over spoil piles to maintain long term productivity of vegetative cover.

7. Tillage and seeding practices will be applied on strip mined areas to establish a vegetative cover.

8. All water developments will be timed in sequence with mining and reclamation plans.

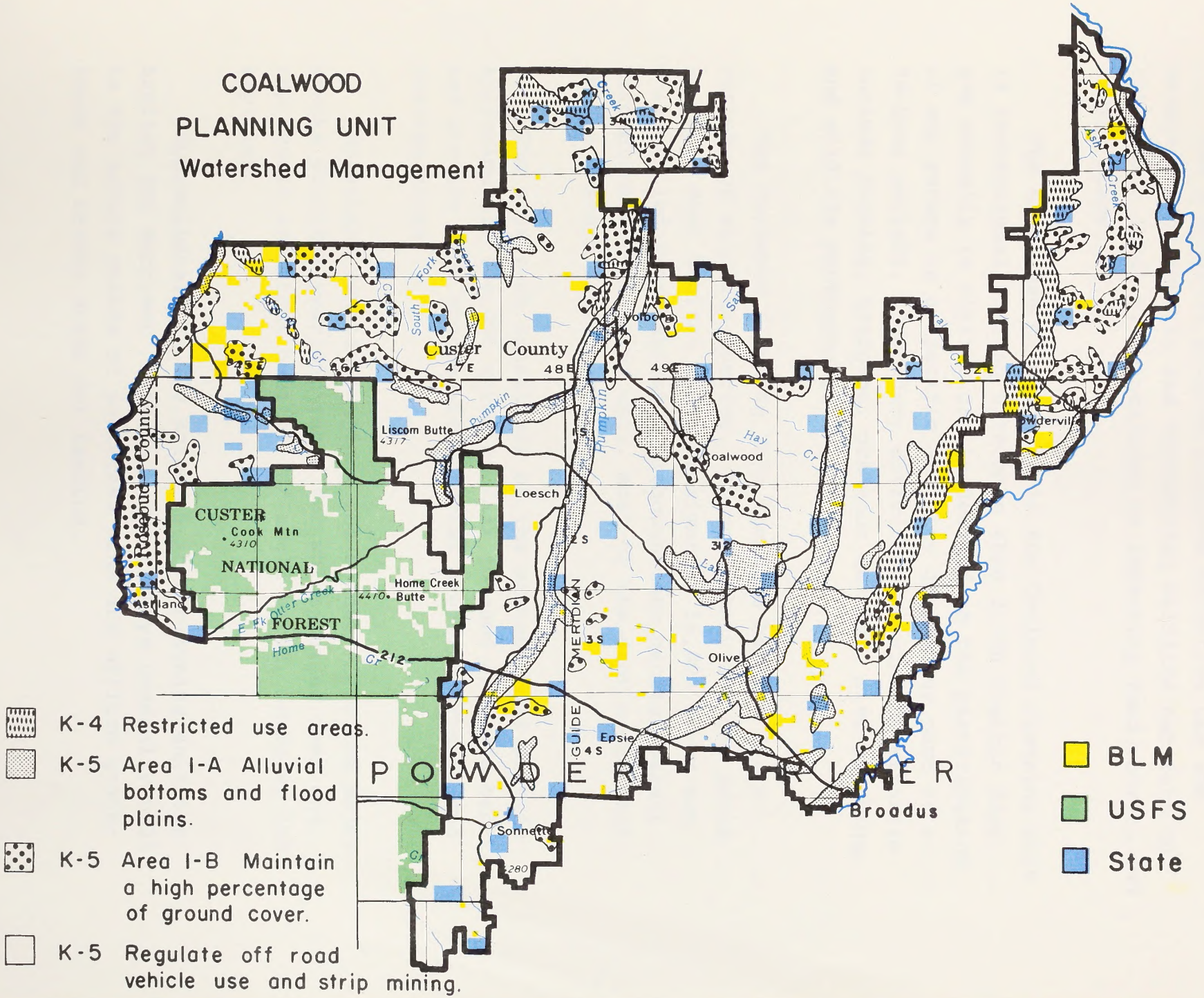
9. Areas identified for coal leasing will be inventoried to determine reclamation requirements to restore or enhance watershed to pre-mining conditions.

10. The effects of strip mining on underground water in the vicinity of the planning unit will be evaluated.

11. Strip mining methods in Watershed Management Area K-5 (Area I-B) will be carefully managed to limit accelerated erosion on poor soils and steep slopes.

12. Where strip mining will not occur in Watershed Management Area K-5, vegetation will be managed to maintain watershed cover.

13. Coal mining will be permitted in the following ecosystems if carefully planned and implemented: grassland, broadleaf, conifer, brush-shrub, and agricultural. Mining will not be permitted where these ecosystems occur in major stream channels or alluvial bottoms.


COALWOOD
PLANNING UNIT
Watershed Management
Custer County
Custer
County
Liscom Butte
4317
Loesch
Coalwood
Volborg
Olive
Epsie
Sonnette
Broadus
Ashland
CUSTER
NATIONAL
FOREST
Cook Mtn
4310
Home Creek
Butte
4470
Home
Cr.
E. Fk. Otter Creek
Pumpkin
Hay
Cr.
MERIDIAN
GUIDE
POWDER RIVER
47E
48E
49E
52E
1S
2S
3S
4S
212
312
280
K-4 Restricted use areas.
K-5 Area I-A Alluvial bottoms and flood plains.
K-5 Area I-B Maintain a high percentage of ground cover.
K-5 Regulate off road vehicle use and strip mining.
BLM
USFS
State

F. Wildlife Habitat Management Program (Background)

BLM's wildlife program promotes effective use and management of aquatic and terrestrial wildlife habitats on the public lands by maintaining or improving food, cover, and living space.

The major use of wildlife in the Coalwood Planning Unit is recreational hunting with more than 2,400 visitor days use annually (a visitor day is defined as the participation of one person in a specific activity during any part of a 24-hour period). Secondary activities related to wildlife include fishing, trapping, predator hunting, bird watching, and wildlife photography.

The Coalwood Planning Unit includes habitat for a variety of wildlife species. Approximately 191,000 acres are mule deer habitat and approximately 16,000 acres are white-tailed deer habitat. Although deer habitat exists throughout the planning unit, most of the deer range lies in the western half.

The sagebrush grasslands of the eastern half provide approximately 430,000 acres of fair to good antelope habitat and provide sage grouse with crucial breeding grounds and nesting sites.

Riverbank vegetation along the Powder River and major creeks provides yearlong range for white-tailed deer and represents important habitat for small birds, mammals, and reptiles.

Approximately 88,700 acres in this planning unit are habitat for Merriams' turkeys. The turkeys generally nest in the mature stands of ponderosa pine and utilize grasslands and brushy draws for feeding.

Ring-necked pheasants use approximately 147,000 acres of habitat in areas where native vegetation is interspersed with agricultural land.

Sharp-tailed grouse and Hungarian partridges are found scattered throughout the planning unit in grassland communities. Waterfowl, primarily puddle ducks, utilize most of the reservoirs for nesting and brooding. Birds of prey are common and golden eagles are known to nest within the planning unit. Predators, particularly coyotes, are common and are of economic concern to local ranchers when they prey on livestock.

A few black-tailed prairie dog towns exist in the area. The total acreage occupied by these towns is presently unknown. The dog towns represent potential habitat for the endangered black-footed ferret. No recent sightings of the black-footed ferret have been recorded for this planning unit.

Warm water fisheries include the Powder River and scattered stockwater reservoirs. The Powder River provides some sport fishing and at least six stockwater reservoirs have been planted with one or more of the following game fish species: northern pike, rainbow trout, large mouth bass, and bluegill.

Wildlife habitat on public lands exists primarily in scattered tracts of land that are intermingled with privately owned surface. Because this divergent land ownership pattern makes it difficult to implement site-specific habitat management programs on public lands, the contiguous ownerships are treated as a single management unit. The resulting wildlife resource allocation decisions are designed to be broad in scope and generally do not address individual tracts of land.

Wildlife Resource Allocation Decisions

Unit-Wide (Except in the area of operations where surface mining is permitted in leased strippable coal resource areas)

1. Through personal contacts, private landowners will be encouraged to maintain a variety of native vegetation in all ecosystems except cultivated lands.

2. The pine and pine-juniper ecosystems will be maintained and associated understory vegetation will be managed to enhance wildlife habitat.

3. Vegetation will be managed to maintain present densities and increase vigor of key browse species for mule deer and white-tailed deer. Streambank vegetation will be managed to maintain cover requirements for white-tailed deer.

4. Birds of prey nesting areas and potential nest sites will be protected from destruction. Nesting areas will be protected from disturbance during the nesting season, March through July.

5. New power transmission facilities will be designed to prevent electrocution of large birds of prey, particularly eagles.

6. Predators and rodents will be managed for public benefit including sightseeing, hunting, trapping, and photography. Authorized control programs will be initiated only when animal damage becomes severely detrimental to other resources.

7. Existing black-tailed prairie dog towns will be inventoried for the presence of the black-footed ferret.

8. All proposals that would modify existing vegetative communities or result in surface disturbance will be coordinated with the wildlife activity.

9. All reservoirs on public lands will be surveyed to identify those with potential for stocking game fish. Suitable reservoirs will be stocked. These activities will be coordinated with Montana Fish and Game Department.

10. An inventory will be conducted to identify all sage grouse and sharp-tailed grouse breeding grounds.

11. Livestock grazing will be managed to promote vigorous stands of shrubs in brushy coulees and native perennial grasses and forbs on adjacent uplands to meet sharp-tailed grouse habitat requirements.

12. Vegetation within a two mile radius of sharp-tailed grouse dancing grounds will be managed to promote adequate perennial grass cover from spring to early summer.

13. A minimum of 20% sagebrush canopy cover will be maintained for sage grouse in those areas where this minimum presently exists.

14. Surface disturbance will be minimized near sharp-tailed grouse dancing grounds April through June and within a two mile radius of sage grouse strutting grounds mid-March through July.

15. Aquatic and shoreline vegetation will be managed at water impoundments to encourage waterfowl and shorebird habitats. This will be accomplished by implementing habitat management plans and livestock grazing management.

16. Public access to public lands for hunting and fishing will be maintained or developed where the opportunity exists. The S-60 Program (recreational land use agreements between BLM and private landowners) will be initiated. Land exchanges will be negotiated where feasible to consolidate public lands.

17. Future livestock fences will be constructed and existing fences will be modified to permit the passage of pronghorn antelope.

Area A (Haylands and croplands adjoining drainage bottoms)

18. Through personal contacts, private landowners will be encouraged to maintain an interspersion of cropland and native vegetation supportive of ring-necked pheasant and Hungarian partridge habitat. The maintenance of native vegetation in fence rows and along field borders will be encouraged.

Area B (Areas of ponderosa pine and pine-grasslands along the Powder River)

19. Ponderosa pine and pine-grassland communities with deciduous shrub understories will be maintained for turkey habitat.

Area C (White-tailed deer habitat)

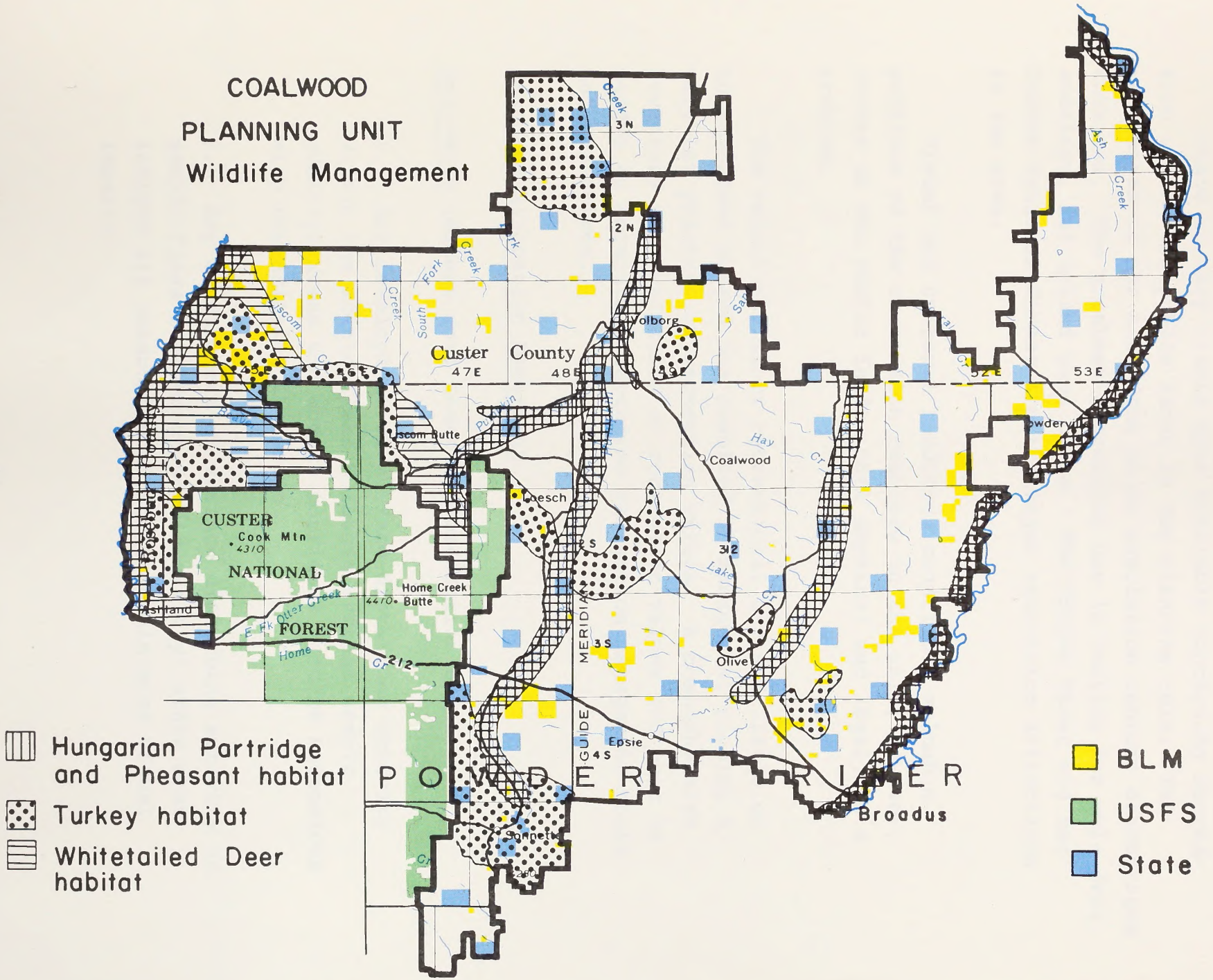
20. Streambank vegetation and coniferous forest communities will be managed to maintain present plant densities and increase plant vigor of important browse species for white-tailed deer.

Areas Identified for Coal Leasing (See minerals resource allocation decisions map, page 14)

21. All wildlife resource allocation decisions will be implemented in areas identified for coal leasing until such time as these areas are mined.

22. Mining reclamation will emphasize restoration of vegetation and landforms to premining conditions.

23. Permanent ponds (at least one pond per section) will be developed on soils where surface water will accumulate from drainages.


COALWOOD
PLANNING UNIT
Wildlife Management
Custer County
47E
48E
52E
53E
3N
2N
1S
3S
4S
Volborg
Coalwood
Olive
Epsie
Broadus
Ashland
Home Creek Butte
4410
Cook Mtn
4310
CUSTER
NATIONAL
FOREST
POWDER RIVER
Hungarian Partridge and Pheasant habitat
Turkey habitat
Whitetailed Deer habitat
BLM
USFS
State

G. Recreation Program (Background)

There is very little data available concerning recreation use on the public lands in the planning unit. The remoteness of the area from major population centers discourages this use. The greatest recreation use is hunting for mule deer, antelope, and upland game birds. The Tongue River and the Custer National Forest are the major recreation attractions in the area.

Visual and cultural resources constitute valuable portions of the recreation resource in the unit; however, access to the public lands, both physical and legal, is a problem.

The relatively minor recreational use and little or no expressed demand has resulted in management placing a very low priority on recreation values. A comprehensive inventory and evaluation of recreation values and uses is needed to accurately determine recreation management goals and objectives.

Resource Allocation Decisions

Unit-Wide (except coal lease recommendation areas)

1. Any development or surface disturbing activity within the scenic Class B (above average scenic quality) areas and scenic corridors must be harmonious with the existing landscape.

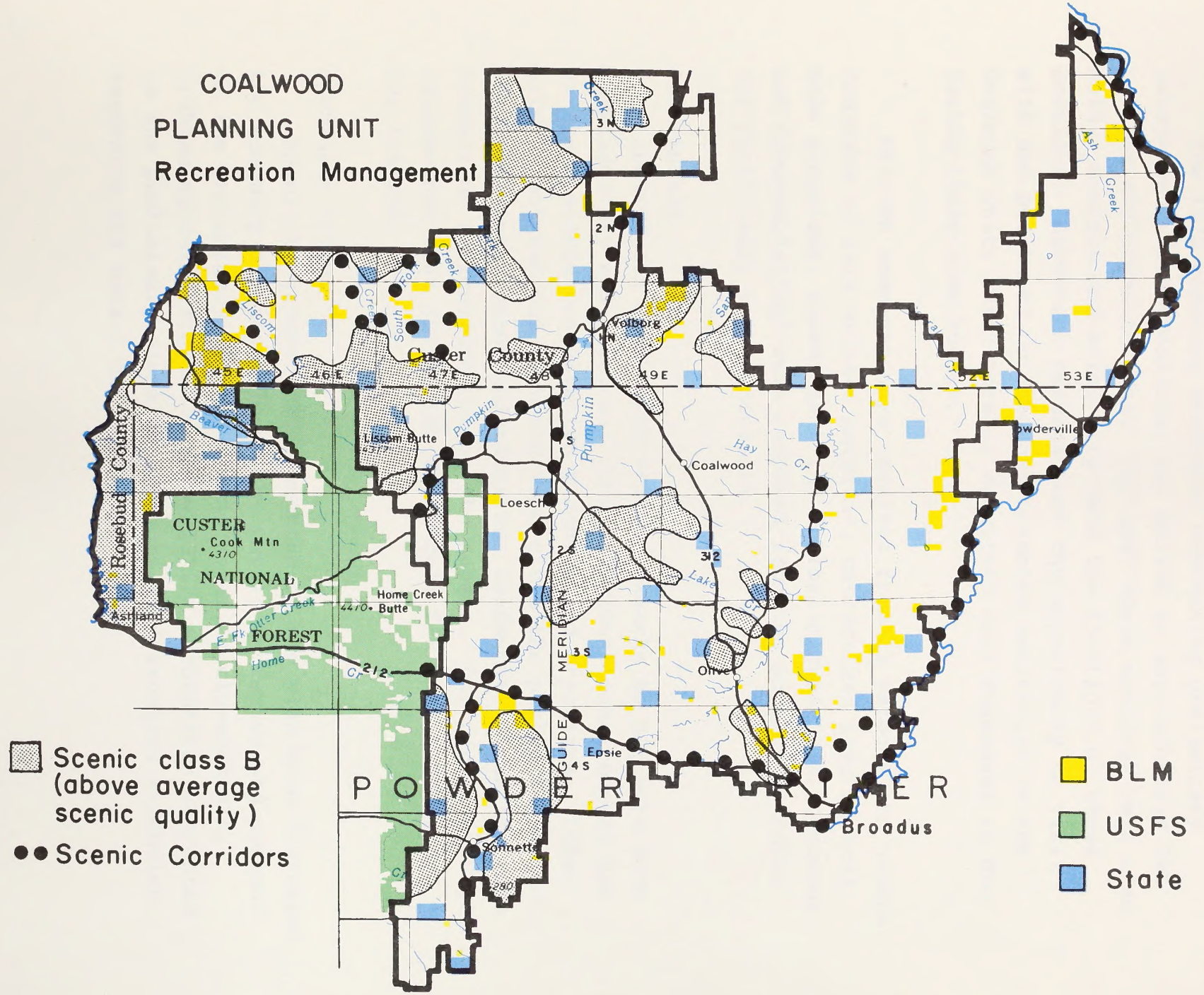
2. Any development or surface disturbing activity in scenic Class C (average scenic quality) areas must include all reasonable measures to minimize visual impacts.

3. Prior to any surface disturbing activities, cultural resource and paleontological inventories and evaluations will be conducted. Appropriate actions will be taken to salvage artifacts and/or modify actions to prevent loss of potential information values.

4. Legal and/or physical access to public lands will be provided where feasible.

5. Any activities which will alter the natural, free-flowing character of the Tongue River and Powder River will be discouraged.

6. Off-road vehicle use on public lands will be monitored and restricted or eliminated if this use is causing erosion problems.


COALWOOD
PLANNING UNIT
Recreation Management
Custer County
Rosebud County
CUSTER
NATIONAL
FOREST
Cook Mtn
4310
Liscom Butte
4372
Home Creek Butte
4410
Ashland
Volborg
Coalwood
Loesch
Olive
Epsie
Sonnette
Broadus
Powderville
MERIDIAN
GUIDE
POWDER RIVER
45E
46E
47E
48E
49E
52E
53E
3N
2N
1N
1S
2S
3S
4S
Scenic class B (above average scenic quality)
Scenic Corridors
BLM
USFS
State

Public Involvement in the Planning Process

The 1975 planning brochure, containing preliminary management recommendations, was mailed to approximately 500 persons and organizations. Two open house meetings were also held. Broadus and Miles City were the locations of these meetings. Seventeen persons took the opportunity to visit with BLM personnel on land use planning activities in the Coalwood Unit. Nine persons submitted oral responses to BLM during these open houses.

Written comments were received from 13 persons and groups. Analysis of this written material, categorized into several main groupings, showed that the following questions, concerns, and recommendations were received from the public regarding the preliminary recommendations.

Individuals

Individuals submitting written remarks to BLM were both complimentary and critical. One individual complimented BLM on its resource conservation planning and practices. Other persons pointed out that the time given the public to review the preliminary recommendations was inadequate given the time demands of agriculture during the summer. One person strongly recommended that the Foster Creek coal field be recommended for leasing.

Specialty Groups

Specialty groups that commented on the plan also discussed the adequacy of time allowed the public to review and comment on the preliminary plans. Ground water, socio-economic, archaeological/historical, and wildlife information presented in the preliminary planning brochure also received attention regarding its detail and adequacy.

Government

Government agencies submitting written comments to BLM on the preliminary planning brochure generally focused on the presentation and clarity of resource and other data. Included was information on socio-economics, air quality, wildlife, and reclamation potential of land recommended to be surface mined. Several government sources exhibited concern toward the public involvement processes carried out by BLM in relationship to the Coalwood Planning Unit. Programs that called for the stocking of game fish in public access areas received support from one government agency.

Industry

The single industrial firm that made remarks on the multiple-use recommendations addressed the leasing situation of federal coal should adjacent surface owners be using fee coal. This source stated that resource waste would result if federal coal were not leased and mined under such a circumstance.

Montana BLM Organization

The Bureau's work in Montana, North Dakota, and South Dakota is administered from a State Office headquarters located in Billings, Montana. Within these three states, the 8.4 million surface acres and 55 million* subsurface acres of public lands are further divided administratively into four districts with District Offices in Butte, Lewistown, and Miles City, Montana; and Dickinson, North Dakota. Each District is divided into Resource Areas to facilitate day to day administration and long-term management on a multiple use basis.

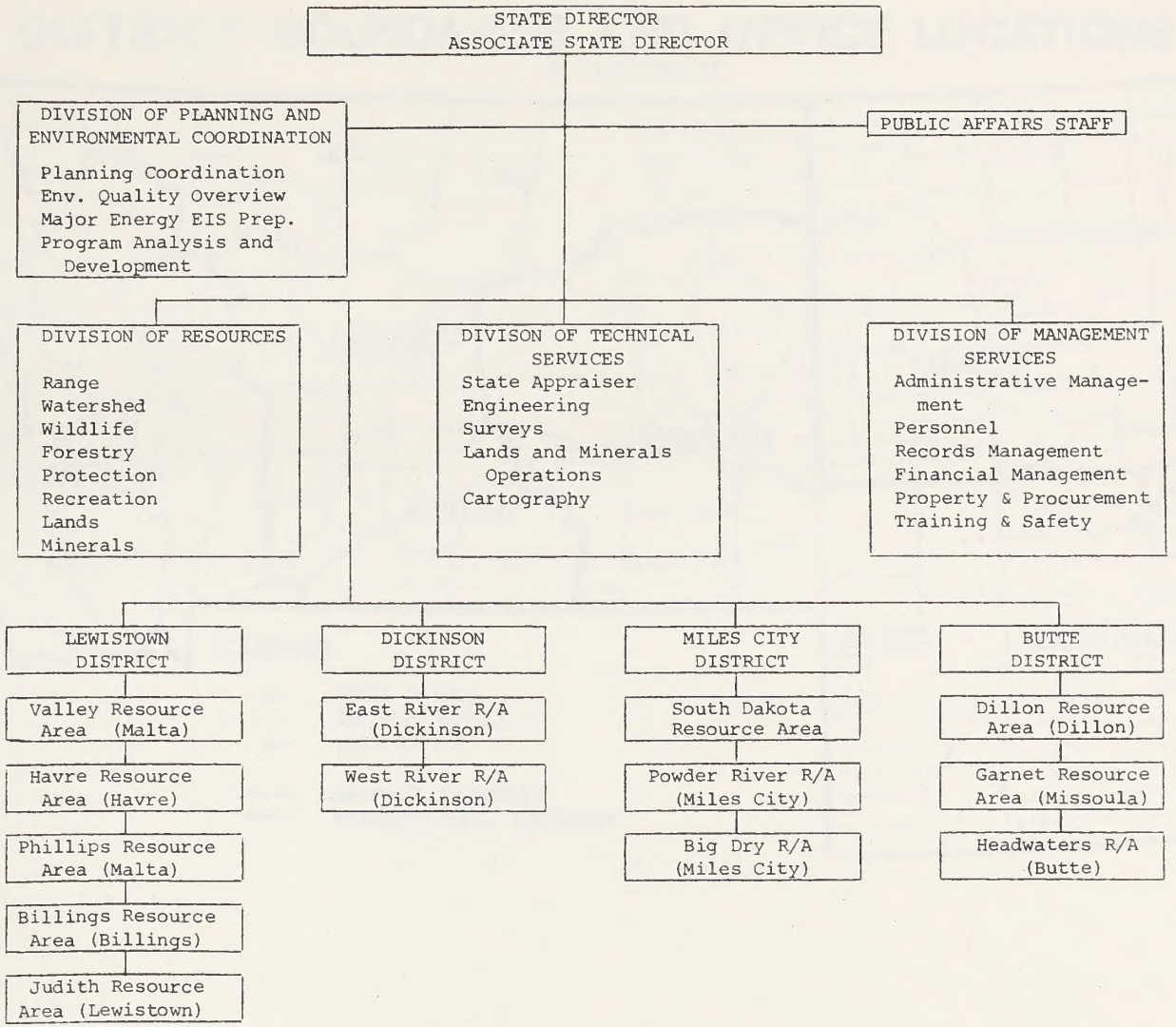
The surface and subsurface acreages administered by the four BLM Districts are noted in the table below:

Acreage Statistics
Montana BLM Organization

District	Surface Ownership BLM	Surface Ownership Other	Subsurface Ownership BLM	Subsurface Ownership Other	Total All Ownership
Butte	1,334,000	33,456,400	2,285,345	32,505,054	34,790,400
Lewistown	3,884,701	33,167,885	8,177,983	28,879,603	37,057,586
Miles City Montana	2,785,299	17,363,119	10,910,741	9,237,677	20,148,418
S. Dakota	276,000	48,335,200	800,000	47,811,200	48,611,200
Dickinson	68,000	44,266,720	4,968,000	39,366,720	44,334,720

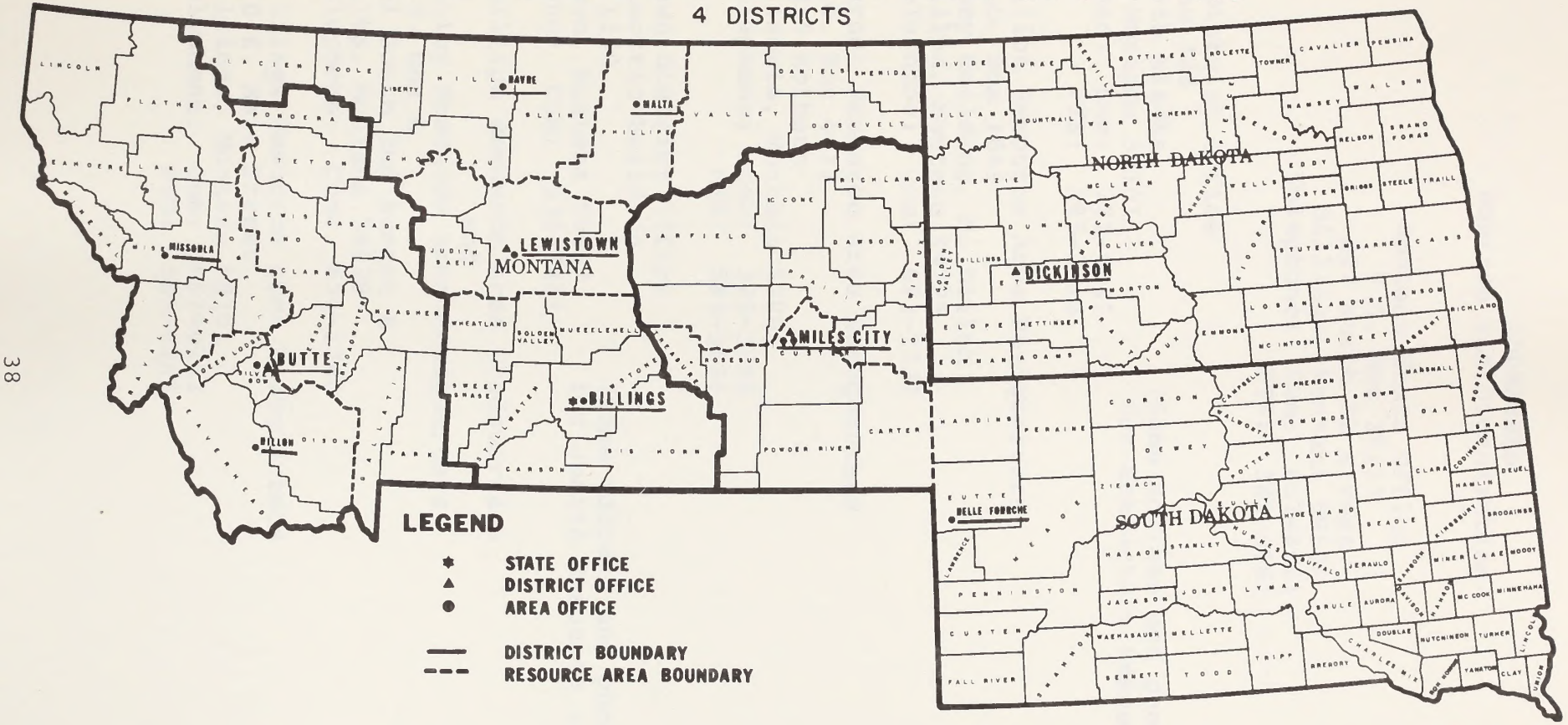
*BLM directly administers approximately 28 million acres of mineral estate and is the leasing agent for an additional 27 million acres of land administered by other federal agencies.

ORGANIZATION CHART
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT - MONTANA



DISTRICT BOUNDARIES AND OFFICE LOCATIONS

4 DISTRICTS



ADDRESSES
Montana BLM Organization

Montana State Office
P.O. Box 30157
222 North 32 Street
Billings, Montana 59101
Telephone: Com: 657-6561
FTS: 585-6561

Butte District Office
P.O. Box 308
220 North Alaska
Butte, Montana 59701
Telephone: Com: 723-6561
FTS: 585-2416

(Same address and phone number for Headwaters Resource Area)

Dillon Resource Area Headquarters
P.O. Box 1048
Ibey Building, N. Dillon
Dillon, Montana 59725
Telephone: Com: 683-2337

Garnet Resource Area Headquarters
P.O. Box 4427
1819 Holborn
Missoula, Montana 59801
Telephone: Com: 329-3686
FTS: 585-3686

Lewistown District Office
Bank Electric Building
Drawer 1160
Lewistown, Montana 59457
Telephone: Com: 538-7461

(Same address and phone number for Judith Resource Area)

Phillips Resource Area Headquarters
and
Valley Resource Area Headquarters
P.O. Box B
501 South 2nd Street E
Malta, Montana 59538
Telephone: Com: 654-1240

Billings Resource Area Headquarters
810 E. Main Street
Billings, Montana 59101
Telephone: Com: 657-6262
FTS: 585-6262

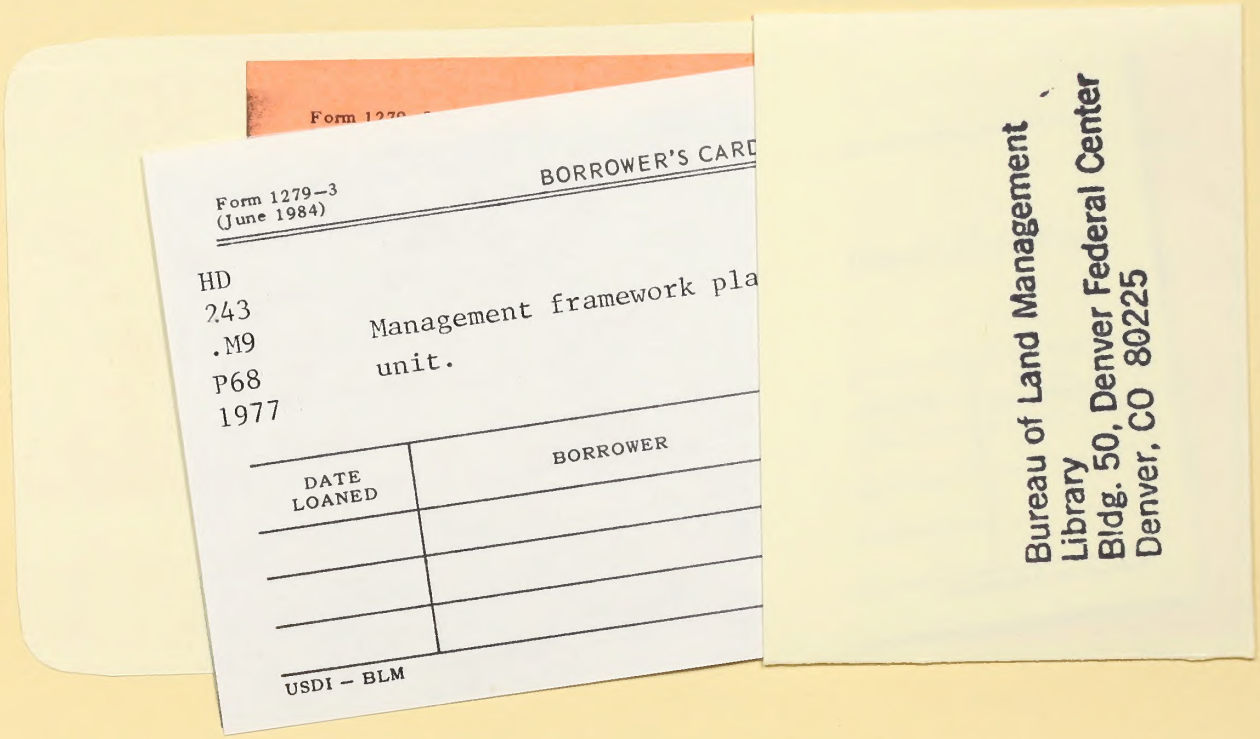
Havre Resource Area Headquarters
Post Office Building
Drawer 911
Havre, Montana 59501
Telephone: Com: 265-5891

Miles City District Office
P.O. Box 940
West of Miles City
Miles City, Montana 59301
Telephone: Com: 232-4331

(Same address and phone number for Powder River and Big Dry Resource Areas)

South Dakota Resource Area Headquarters
310 Roundup Street
Belle Fourche, South Dakota 57717
Telephone: Com: 892-2526

Dickinson District Office
P.O. Box 1229
Pulver Hall
Dickinson, North Dakota 58601
Telephone: Com: 225-9148


Form 1279-3
(June 1984)
BORROWER'S CARD
HD
243
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1977
Management framework pla
unit.
DATE LOANED
BORROWER
USDI - BLM
Bureau of Land Management
Library
Bldg. 50, Denver Federal Center
Denver, CO 80225